

STORIES ABOUT DOORS

By John F. Hall

There are many doors that we all pass through in this life. Unless we are born at home, we are carried out of the hospital door after we are born. Then we go in and out of the front door where we live. Then it is in and out of the church where we worship Christ.



Then it is in and out of the schools that we attend. From shopping in stores, going to movies, and so many other places, we are constantly going in and out of doors.

On Most Sunday mornings, I open up the church doors at the small church that I attend. The first door that I unlock is a side door to the church. Once inside, I turn on all of the interior lights. Then I walk up to the front of the church and say a little prayer. Christ has kept me around for more years than I deserve. He knows that I'm an old sinner, saved only by His grace. He knows what I'm going to say even before I say a single word. He knows my thoughts. Without His grace and His inspiration, I would have run out of things to write about a long, long time ago. If I am to make a difference in the lives of other people, by my stories, then I need Christ's blessings in my stories.

One thing that I do in my stories is to write about a current event, and then I'll go back and write about a past event. I knew that I wanted to be at the Village Medical Center in Murray, Kentucky by 8:30 AM for blood work that was ordered by my family physician, Dr. Dania] Butler. I don't know how many times that I've been through the doors to his office, these past 20 years or more, that he has been my physician. I, also consider Daniel to be a friend. I always get a smile on my face when I remember what I told him years ago. I thanked him for keeping me alive. He told me: "God keeps you alive, I merely do some tinkering." But I do have a dermatologist, Dr. Natalie Curcio in Nashville, Tennessee. My skin cancer had gotten down to my skull, and she got all of it. In a follow up visit, I said to her: "You saved my life." She was busy getting something ready, and without looking up, she said: "I know." It was just another door that I went into in that Musical city. And every three months, I have to go through her door.

Going back into the distant past, I remember how I would fight my fear of heights. I would be the last paratrooper to go in the door of the C-119 "Flying Boxcar." The Air Force aircraft would level out at 2,000 feet above the drop zone. The Jump Master would open the door at the rear of the plane. He would yell: "Stand up! Check equipment! Hook up static line!" He would wait for the pilot to turn on the green light over that door. I would be the first to jump. As soon as the green light came on, the Jump Master would say: "Go! Go!" I would jump out of that door. The first thing that I would feel is the hot blast of air from the turbo-prop propeller. Then the jerk when my parachute opened. Even though I was falling at 22 feet per second, it felt as if I was not moving fast at all.

The past Sunday, I was standing outside of the church door. It was bitter cold. I had on a heavy long wool over my suit. I had on gloves and ear muffs. The door is hard to open for some of the older, frail members, so I open the door for them. One of the members of the church had painted on the tail gate of his pick up truck these words: "I stand for the National Anthem and I kneel for Christ." In some of my previous stories I mention that I depend on Christ's grace and inspiration for my stories. There is a hymn written by Keith Getty and Stuart Townend called, "In Christ Alone." I guess that it captures my relationship with Christ. These are their lyrics: "In Christ alone my hope is found. He is my light, my strength, my song. This cornerstone, this solid ground, firm through the fiercest drought and storm. What heights of love, what depths of peace, when fears are stilled, when strivings cease. My comforter, my all in all, here in the love of Christ I stand. In Christ alone who took on flesh, fullness of God in helpless babe. The gift of love and righteousness scorned by the ones He came to save. Till on the cross as Jesus died, the wrath of God was satisfied. For every sin on Him was laid, here in the death of Christ I live. There in the ground his body lay, light of the world by darkness slain. Then bursting forth in glorious day, up from the grave He rose again. And as He stands in victory, sin's curse has lost its grip on me. For I am His and He is mine, brought with the precious blood of Christ. No guilt in life, no fear in death, this is the power of Christ in me. From life's first cry to final breath, Jesus commands my destiny. No power of hell, no scheme of man, can pluck me from his hand. Till He returns or calls me home, here in the power of Christ I stand."

One cold January, in 1990, I was mobilized on Fort Knox for Operation Desert Storm. I was a captain and the Liaison Officer for all the Army Reserve and National Guard units coming to be certified for deployment. My days were long and they started in the Division Commanders conference room. To gain access to that room, I had to show my military identification card to an armed Military Police soldier at that door. He would look at a list of soldiers authorized access to enter. Once a unit was certified for deployment, I would go with that unit to a deployment briefing in one of the movie theaters on Post. It seemed like I was constantly going through one door and going out another door, seven days a week. At the briefings, they would play the same two songs. The first song was written by Lee Greenwood called, "God Bless the USA." The second song was written by Aaron Tippin and William Brock, called, "You've Got to Stand for Something." I was impressed with several lyrics in that song. These are those lyrics: "You've got to be your own man not a puppet on a string. Never compromise what's right and uphold your family name. You've got to stand for something or you'll fall for anything..."

In Matthew, Chapter 7, Verse 7, are these words: "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. I was impressed by a painting that shows Jesus Christ standing by a door that had no door knob. The only way for Him to enter that door, is for the person behind that door, to open the door from the inside. The point is that, because He gave us a free will, we decide if we are going to answer that knock and let Christ into our life, or to ignore the knock on that door, and just live for our creature comforts and our creature friends.

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